

I claim:

1) A system for collecting consumer data comprising:

a user interface,

software associated with said interface for monitoring a user interaction; and

5 a database for storing a plurality of data related to said user interaction.

2) The system as described in Claim 1, wherein said user interface displays at least one public opinion gauge.

3) The system as described in Claim 2, wherein said at least one public opinion gauge is a survey.

10 4) The system as described in Claim 1, wherein said user interface displays advertisements.

5) The system as described in Claim 1, wherein said database has an architecture through which said plurality of said user interaction data can be provided to a third-party.

15 6) The system as described in Claim 5, wherein said plurality of said user interaction data contains a group of user-specific information.

7) The system of claim 6, wherein said group of user specific information can be withheld from disclosure to said third party.

8) The system as described in Claim 1, wherein said consumer data contains user

demographic data.

9) The system as described in Claim 1, wherein said consumer data contains user preference data.

10) A system as described in Claim 1, wherein said software tracks user activities with said user interface and provides rewards for specific activities.

11) A system as described in Claim 1, wherein said user interface is displayed on a traditional computer.

12) A system as described in Claim 1, wherein said user interface is displayed on a kiosk.

13) A system as described in Claim 1, wherein said user interface is displayed on a portable computing device.

14) A system as described in Claim 1, wherein said user interface includes audible, tactile, and olfactory stimulation in addition to visual stimulation.

15) A system as described in Claim 2, wherein said user interface displays at least one of a plurality of other content including news, entertainment, or other multimedia content along with said at least one public opinion gauge.

16) A method of collecting consumer data comprising the steps of:

providing an electronically accessible user interface,

monitoring user interaction with said interface; and

storing a plurality of data based upon said user interaction.

17) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of:

displaying at least one public opinion gauge on said user interface.

18) The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of:

5 providing incentives for interaction with said interface.

19) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of:

providing said plurality of data on user interaction to a customer.

20) The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of:

10 filtering said plurality of data on user interaction provided to said customer to allow only data approved by said user to be provided.

21) A method for determining which public opinion gauge to display based on consumer preferences comprising the steps of:

determining a consumer user's personal information,

determining a consumer user's preferred public opinion gauge categories;

15 analyzing existing public opinion gauges based upon said consumer user's personal information and said consumer user's preferred public opinion gauge categories;

ranking said public opinion gauges based upon said analysis; and

displaying said public opinion gauge based upon said ranking.

22) A method for determining which public opinion gauge to display based upon activity comprising the steps of:

- 5       calculating a public opinion gauge age factor;
- calculating a public opinion gauge recent activity factor;
- calculating an activity index based upon said public opinion gauge age factor and public opinion gauge recent activity factor; and
- displaying a public opinion gauge based upon said activity index.

10       23) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of:

          determining the activity index without querying a voting database.

15       24) The method of claim 22, further comprising the steps of:

          determining said activity index based upon a time period, a vote frequency and a vote distribution.

25) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of:

calculating said activity index including using a weighting factor for newly created

surveys thereby compensating for a low vote count.

5 26) A method for providing direct interaction between a consumer a company comprising the steps of:

providing an Internet portal community with a consumer user interface for the collecting consumer information and opinions;

providing a company direct access to said consumer user interface to address the consumer opinions.

27) A method of mining consumer user data from an interactive public opinion gauge comprising the steps of:

providing a public opinion gauge as part of a user interface on an Internet portal site;

15 structuring said public opinion gauge to allow for data related to consumer interaction with said public opinion gauge to be retrieved; and

capturing data related to consumer interaction with said public opinion gauge.

28) A method of providing rewards to a consumer for the collection and dissemination of consumer information comprising the steps of:

providing an Internet portal community for a consumer to input personal information;

tracking consumer internet portal activity;

collecting said consumer input information and said activity information;

providing rewards to consumers to share collected information; and

disseminating said information to companies thereby triggering an automatic payment of said rewards incentives to said consumers.

29) The method of claim 28, further comprising the steps of:

providing said consumers with predefined levels of information dissemination.

30) A method of formulating a consumer public opinion gauge comprising the steps of:

providing an Internet portal community within an Internet portal system where a

consumer users can interact with a public opinion gauge;

providing a software application within said Internet portal system, which allows said consumer user to create a new interactive public opinion gauge; and

presenting said new interactive public opinion gauge within said Internet portal

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